

Select Notes.

BY J. B. LAIR

—The chief product of Christianity, is good men and women. Some people believe themselves on God's side, while other people seem to think that God is on their side.

—Some man recently wrote the paragraph that 'we are not damned for not doing wrong, but for doing right,' and I am not certain but he is right, for there is too much negative religion in the world now-a-days. Some people think they will never be saved because they do not do anything very bad, and yet they do nothing good.

—'To do so no more is the truest repentance,' Luther.

—'Silence is the wit of fools and one of the virtues of the wise.'

—'What we know we ought not to do, we ought never think of doing.' *Epicurus*.

—Some people only understand enough of a truth to reject it. This is one of the truest sayings of the age.

—'You cannot dream yourself into character, you must hammer and forge yourself in.' *Proude*.

—Men will wrangle for religion, write for it, fight for it, die for it, anything but live for it.

—The last annual report of the commissioner, of internal revenue shows that the quantity of grain used in the production of spirits last year was 16,122,500, bushels; a decrease of 1,851,000, from the amount used the preceding fiscal year, and 4,898,273 less than the average for the last ten years. The number of gallons of spirits produced from grain, during the year was 68,388,160 which shows a decrease of 7,586,216 gallons from the product of the preceding year, and 13,514,317 gallons less than the average for the last ten years.

It certainly is a shame and a disgrace to a so called Christian country that they should use more than 16 millions of bushels of grain, and make more than 68 millions of liquor, as much as a gallon of liquor for each man, woman and child in the country. But still I feel like saying HURRAH FOR PROHIBITION! if we can control the product more than 13 millions in one year, and keep on at that rate. It will not take but 5 or 6 years more to abolish the evil; be not discouraged. The thought is encouraging anyway, if the fact is more than we can expect.

—One can buy whiskey on the Sabbath in Kansas City, but not clothing. Last spring the proper officers in Kansas City concluded to enforce the 'closing ordinance,' hence the saloons were closed for a few months, on the Sabbath. The result was that, instead of 30 to 50 arrests for drunkenness on the Sabbath, the number was reduced to 3 to 5. It may be that this did not pay the officers sufficiently, at any rate the saloon men broke over, and now the saloons are all open on the Sabbath. But recently there has been an ordinance enforced, compelling the Jews, and others who were disposed to keep their shops open on the Sabbath to 'close up,' and now clothes cannot be bought on the Sabbath, but whiskey can.

How Shall We Regard the Bible.

What are we to do with the Bible? How are we to regard it? Is it the best book in the world or the worst? Is it a true book, or is it a false book? Is it God's book, or is it man's book?

We find men on all sides of the question. There are persons who tell us this book is a good book—but then, there are others just as good. The Bible is inspired, and so was Plato inspired, so was Socrates, and so is the almanac inspired; in fact, everything is inspired—the book of Mormon, the Koran of Mahomet, the sacred books of the Hindoos and the Chinese;—they have their Bibles, you have yours; all are good, and one is about as good as the other. Shakespeare was inspired, Milton was inspired, Thomas Paine was inspired, and everything and everybody is inspired.

It is not worth while to waste time on false issues. When I open Shakespeare's plays I do not read at the commencement, 'Thus saith the Lord God of hosts;' when I turn to Plato's writings I do not read, 'Hear ye the word of the Lord;' when I peruse the almanac I do not read, 'The word of the Lord came unto me.' Hence, you see that this

book must be judged by a standard different from all other books. Over and over again this book says, 'Hear ye the word of the Lord.' Now, the message is the word of the Lord, or is it a lie. It is the word of the Lord, as it professes to be, or it is a cheat, a swindle, a humbug, a fraud.

To illustrate: A man tells me that Jesus of Nazareth was a good man; but then, there were other men just as good. He was a spiritual medium; but there are other mediums equally powerful in these days. To be sure, I do not remember any spiritual medium giving a public dinner, for nothing to five thousand hungry people! You may have heard of such a 'manifestation,' but it has not fallen under my notice. I have not heard of a spiritual medium hushing the winds or calming a storm at sea. I have heard of dancing tables and similar operations. I prefer to have my tables stand still!

But while you say, 'Christ was simply one of many remarkable men,' He says, 'I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world; again, I leave the world, and go to the Father.' He says, 'O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.' Now do you say he was a good man, and yet he told lies? What is your idea of a good man? I do not believe that a good man lies; and I do not believe that a man who lies is a good man. Perhaps you do, but if so, you were brought up in a different way from that in which my father brought me up. So I do not believe that a book packed with lies from one end to the other is a good book, and I do not want any one to come and tell me that Jesus Christ was a good man, and the Bible is a good book, but neither of them tell the truth. I join issue there. This book is what it professes to be, or it is a swindle; Jesus of Nazareth was what he professed to be, or he was an impostor.

Suppose a man comes to town and represents himself as the son of a British nobleman. He is well dressed, has plenty of money, turns the heads of half the young ladies in town, and makes himself at home generally; but after a while they find out that he is the son of 'old Jenkins, the blacksmith,' down in the next town. Now I do not want you to tell me how prettily he behaves, what fine broadcloth he wears, or what a perfect gentleman he is in all his deportment. The fact is, he is a liar, a fraud, and a scamp. He has come under false colors, and palmed himself off on the community under false pretenses; and the more good things you say about him the less I think of him; because, if he is such a well educated gentleman, he knows better than to be going around as a fraud and deceiving the people. So we must accept Jesus of Nazareth and his claims entirely, or else we must reject the whole Gospel as an imposture, and as the grandest, most stupendous fraud the world has ever known.

From a Lecture on The Inspiration of The Bible, by H. L. HASTINGS.

Preventive Mercies.

God's gifts to us often excite our gratitude and thankful praise, but how seldom do we remember to thank him for the preventive mercies of our life. How often we ought to bless God for hindering us in our plans, for putting obstacles in our way, and for preventing our selfwill from triumphing, we can only judge by the escapes we make; and even then we do not begin to know it all. We know the accidents that actually occur, but how many unsuspected ones have been warded off? What perils have been on our right and on our left and warded off only by God's omnipotent hand? When a thousand fall at our side, and ten thousand at our right hand and danger comes not near to us, we understand God's preventive care and bless Him for it. But is it not even more wonderful that we are kept from the very sight and sound of danger? Physiologists tell us that every day we have many narrow escapes from death. We do not know how often death has passed by us so closely that it scarcely left room for a breath between it and ourselves. We learn only of the events that do take place of accidents that do happen, of the sudden deaths that do occur, and know not of the many perils from which we have been shielded by God's

preventive mercies.—In copying this for the printer, the writer's name was lost.

Without Distractions.

As the soul must be clean from sin, so it must be clear and free from distractions. The intent of our devotion is to welcome God to our hearts. Now where shall we entertain Him if the rooms be full, thronged with cares and turbulent passions? The Spirit of God will not endure to be crowded up together with the world in our strait lodgings; a holy vacuity must make way for Him in our bosoms. The divine pattern of devotion in whom the Godhead dwelt bodily retires into the mount to pray; he that carried heaven with Him would even thus leave the world below him. Alas! how can we hope to mount up to heaven in our thoughts if we have the clogs of earthly cares hanging at our heels?—BISHOP HALL.

A Sixth Sense.

Purity is a sixth sense, opening to us what the material senses can never discern—the vision of God. The most beautiful things open not to the eye, but to the soul fitted to understand them. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they see what the artistic eye of no Turner, Titian, or Reynolds can detect. To see God is a higher gift than to discern the beauties His hand has diffused through nature. To a man of materialistic tastes a poor poet-painter said, 'When the sun rises you see something like a golden guinea coming out of the sea. I see, and hear likewise, something like an innumerable company of angels praising God.' —ZION'S HERALD.

Decision.

In the Assay Office in New York is a balance whose distinctive feature is its combination of sensitiveness with decision. Turned by the smallest fraction of a grain, it will move right on. They had one formerly which was extremely sensitive, but lacked decision, so that it went quivering from one side to another for a long time before it settled, and frequently they would waste fifteen minutes in getting a result, which can be obtained from this one in a second. How like that wavering balance many men are, abundantly sensitive, but lacking decisiveness?—DR. W. M. TAYLOR.

'God Loves You.'

Edward Irving went to see a dying boy once; and when he entered the room he just put his hand on the sufferer's head, and said, 'My boy, God loves you,' and went away. And the boy started from his bed, and he called out to the people in the house: 'God loves me! God loves me!' One word; one word! It changed that boy. The sense that God loved him, had overpowered him, melted him down and began the making of a new heart. —PROF. DRUMMOND.

"Thy Sweet Will."

Clouds that gather round my head
Seen the wings of God outspread;
Hours of thought and worldly care
Full sweetest comfort are;
Words of bitterness and sneer
Fall like music on my ear.

Once I could not thus partake
Of each cup for Jesus' sake,
But I learned, one bitter day,
To look up and meekly say,
'Thy sweet will, dear Lord, not mine,
Thy sweet will, and only Thine.'

As the dear Christ on the sea
Hushed the billows, so to me
Did He speak, and gently say,
Peace, my brother, peace alway;
And upon my soul He breathed,
I the peace of heaven received.

Like a quiet little child,
Humble, lowly, meek and mild,
Day by day I try to take
All that comes for Jesus' sake.
On this thought my soul doth rest,
'God for me will do the best.'

Oh! how easy now to see
All things are for good to me:
Pain and loss, or smile and cheer,
Christ in all is very dear;
For my heart is whispering still,
'Thy sweet will, Lord, thy sweet will.'

SELECTED.